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SUBJECT: ANGOLA SITUATION REPORT NUMBER 01 - FLOOD EMERGENCY ALERT

11. SUMMARY: Heavy rains that began in late January following an extended drought period have triggered severe flooding in Southern Angola. In Cunene province on the Namibian border, 52,281 people have been affected, 26,915 of them displaced. Six deaths have been reported, with an unknown number of missing and injured. In neighboring Kuando Kubango province to the east, 29,162 people are reported displaced, along with eight deaths and four injuries. Relief response provided by the Angolan authorities has focused on Cunene's capital, Ondjiva, where major damage has occurred. Emergency response delivery in Kuando Kubango has been slower in that difficult-to-access province. Other provinces are also suffering the effects of heavy rainfall, including Benguela, where on March 13 eleven people were killed and 700 displaced following severe storms. Several other provinces - Moxico, Uige, Zaire, Lunda Sul, Lunda Norte and Kwanza Norte - are likewise at elevated flood risk, due to recent heavy rains. END SUMMARY.

12. GOA RESPONSE TO DATE: The authorities have been relatively successful in keeping the situation under control in Cunene and Benguela; they have been less successful in delivering assistance to more isolated communities in Kuando Kubango. In Cunene two camps have been established for more than 14,000 displaced persons. Basic health care is being provided through fixed health posts within the camps and a mobile clinic for affected people on the outside. The displaced have been supplied with food, water, kitchen kits, blankets and shelter materials. Levees have been built to contain the flooding. In Benguela, the provincial authorities and the Civil Protection Service were able to react rapidly to incessant downpours that occurred from February 5 - 20, which were accompanied by gusty winds and flooding that resulted in 11 deaths and hundreds displaced. According to the Head of the Civil Protection Service, General Laborinho, the situation in Benguela is being capably managed by authorities there. In Kuando Kubango, although provincial authorities reported the arrival of some food and non-food items, such as tents and emergency medicine kits, the government's response overall has been slow, according to a report by a UN technical assistance team that accompanied government officials in the province last week. When asked, General Laborinho confirmed that it has indeed been more difficult to initiate relief operations in Kuando Kubango, due partly to the dispersed nature of the flooding as well as the hazards posed by landmines in the province.

13. INTERNATIONAL and NON-GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSE: In the absence of an appeal by the GOA, the international community's response has been relatively muted. In Cunene, agencies of the United Nations have been assisting authorities with establishment of camps and managing the displaced population's health needs. A worrisome sign

has been a surge in cholera, with the province registering 43 percent of the 3,019 cases reported nationwide by WHO between January 1 and March 9. UNICEF has been working with the Provincial Health Department, the NGO ADPP, scouts and the Angolan Red Cross to develop a social mobilization plan for the camps and affected communities that focuses on malaria, cholera and basic hygiene. USAID/OFDA financial support provided last year to UNICEF to fight cholera has contributed to this effort through the provision of supplies. In both Cunene and Kuando Kubango, some 10,000 impregnated bednets have been distributed. WFP has made available 320 metric tons of food from its stock, but it has not been distributed as yet. Many of the displaced are being sheltered by family and friends, while others are temporarily in schools and being supported by donations from churches and community members. The Baptist Mission reported sending 500 zinc sheets and 3,000 mosquito nets to Cunene to aid the recovery.

14. WEATHER OUTLOOK: The SADC Drought Monitoring Center has forecast a high likelihood of above normal rainfall in central, southern and eastern Angola during the period January to March 2008. The continued rainfall means the flood threat will persist.

15. USG MISSION RESPONSE: The Mission Disaster Relief Officers have been monitoring the situation and providing regular updates to the Chief of Mission. Information has been sought from government, UN agencies and local NGOs. In Cunene, USAID implementer - Research Triangle Institute (RTI) - is working with the Provincial Department of Public Health to monitor malaria trends with the view to undertaking residual indoor spraying as circumstances warrant.

16. POSSIBLE AREAS FOR ASSISTANCE: The GOA, as conveyed by the Head of its Civil Protection Service, welcomes assistance from outside agencies. In addition to identifying short-term emergency requirements in Kuando Kubango such as shelter materials, kitchen kits, water/sanitation material, blankets, used clothes and food, General Laborinho expressed a strong interest in USG support for emergency preparedness training, risk mapping and public hazard education. The GOA expects the emergency phase will last until May.

The government has publicly committed to resettling thousands of families in homes in less flood-prone areas, once the rainy season ends. Food insecurity will be a continuing worry, especially for rural residents. In Cunene up to 37,000 cattle are reported killed by the floods, and 74,000 hectares of agricultural fields destroyed.

In Kuando Kubango more than 2,070 fields have been ruined by the heavy rainfall and by elephant and hippopotamus movements triggered by flooding. OFDA technical assistance to assess potential recovery strategies for agriculture, livestock and other livelihoods may be warranted. Mission will continue to monitor closely this emergency situation and apprise concerned Washington agencies of any recommended USG intervention and assistance.

17. Mervyn Farroe is the Mission Disaster Relief Officer. He can be reached at 244-222-641-008 (office) and 244-912-504-207 (mobile). Gastao Lukangu is the Alternate Mission Disaster Relief Officer. He can be reached at 244-222-641-131 (office) and 244-924-694-034 (mobile).

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